1	2Karimnagar HO

5. Daba Gardens LSG PO
6. L B Colony SO
7. Nizambad RS LSG PO
8. D H Satun SO

Effect of private telecom operators on teledensity

747.SHRIT.T.V DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the teledensity in the country has gone up as a result of allowing private operators in communication network;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the percentage of coverage of rural areas by private operators out of their total communication coverage in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The entry of private operators in telecom sector was allowed with the announcement of National Telecom Policy-1994 (NTP--94). The overall teledensity which was only 0.89% then has risen continuously and has touched 11.76% as on 31.01.2006.

(c) The coverage of rural areas by private operators is almost negligible on account of non-viability of the operations. However, they have provided a total ST'^OS Rural Diirect Exchange Lines (RDELs), 9641 Village Public Telephones (VPTs) and 6119 Rural Community Phones (RCPs) Under the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) as on 31.12.2005.

Elimination of access deficit charges

748. SHRI C. RAMACHANIDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Reguljitory Authority of India (TRAI) has mooted a three-stage process to elimtinate the Access Deficit Charges (ADCs) regime by 2008-09;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has advocated for continuation of ADC in order to support BSNL in its rural telephony efforts;

(d) if so, whether Government have taken any decision in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) *vide* para 98 of its. "The Telecommunication Interconnection Usage Charges Regulation, 2003 dated 29.10.2003" noted that the ideal regime would be a Universal Service Obligation (USO) type regime that is both simple to implement and does not impose regulatory incentives/disincentives based on differential ADC burden for different kinds of calls. The Authority is of the opinion that the prevailing ADC regime should be made to transition towards an USO type of regime by 2008-09.

(c) to (e) Department of Telecommunications is of the opinion that ADC should continue in order to provide support for affordable tariffs. TRAI has been apprised accordingly.

Access deficit charge

749. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have put an embargo on the release of Access Deficit Charge (ADC) order;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the total charges collected from consumers towards the ADC to fund rural telephony since 2003;

(d) the amount utilized for rural telephony from the charges collected frqm consumers during the same period; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to reduce the burden on consumers without compromising Government collections?